

DENVER CENTRAL LIBRARY
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In the Matter of:

Wireline Competition Bureau Seeking Comments on E-rate Category Two) WC Docket No. 13-184

The Denver Public Library is pleased to provide input on the impact of having access to secure and sufficient funding for library Wi-Fi and Internal connections. Before the 2014 E-rate Modernization, virtually no libraries received funds for these services. Unless we were at a 90 percent discount rate, we could assume there would be no funding left after all requests for internet access were funded. USAC data shows that most libraries are eligible for a 70 percent discount or less and according to the American Library Association, many libraries stopped bothering to apply for Wi-Fi funding. At that time, Denver Public Library was at an 80 percent discount level and was in this situation. The City's IT department did not feel it worth pursuing E-rate funding beyond Priority One services.

Additionally, because it was difficult to separate library traffic from the City network, many municipalities either did not apply for library funding or were very conservative in their allocations. This was improved in the City and County of Denver with Priority Two funding. Using these funds, the library was able to establish its own independent network, and can now seek full funding for library bandwidth. This improved library services and resulted in hard and soft savings for the City and County. The library can now provide less restricted access, which benefits customers in addressing the digital divide. The additional speed increase allows the library to centralize management of its close to 1,000 public computers, which ensures access to online job applications and e-government sites. This allows us to increase time limits on public computers so people can access the Internet. We know that many of our customers use our network to take online classes, connect with their families and start small businesses.

Some states have reported that none of their libraries have received Wi-Fi funds since the beginning of the E-rate program. After establishing the library's independent network, Denver Public Library was able to use Priority Two funding to replace its aging Wi-Fi system. This increase allowed us to not only meet current customer need, but be prepared for the future.

In communities across the country, people turn to the library to use our Wi-Fi on their tablets, laptops, mobile phones and other devices. Library users are downloading job applications, applying for financial aid, seeking health information, and communicating with family--all dependent on a strong Wi-Fi signal. Increasingly, libraries also provide services that depend on

Wi-Fi, like coding clubs for K12 youth. Libraries everywhere know Wi-Fi throughout the library is not a “nice to have” - it's a core community service.

With the commitment of the FCC to ensure a library budget of \$2.30 (\$5.00 for a selected category of larger urban and suburban libraries) per square foot, libraries can finally upgrade outdated equipment or plan for new construction. They have confidence that desperately needed support will be there.

Please maintain secure funding through the full five year budget period as adopted during the 2014 Modernization. Our communities depend on that funding.